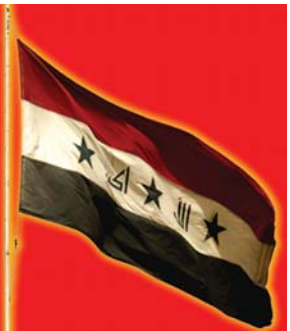




THIS WEEK IN IRAQ



Vol. 1, No. 10

Published by Multi-National Force - Iraq

October 19, 2005



Courtesy photo

Iraqi women lift their purple-stained fingers, proudly showing that they had voted in Saturday's constitutional referendum.

Freedom: 10 million Iraqis vote

By Multi-National Force - Northwest
Public Affairs

MOSUL — Polling centers opened early throughout Iraq Saturday allowing citizens to stand up and vote for or against the constitutional referendum that would define their democracy.

Voters went to the polls by the thousands to cast their ballots and participate in this historic national referendum in Tall Afar, which during the January elections had the second-lowest voter turnout in the country. Iraqi Army and police were the first to vote in Tall Afar. The people of Mosul turned out in huge numbers.

Lines in a city south of Mosul extended more than 200 meters. Iraqi Army Soldiers from 3rd Iraqi Army Brigade reported 34,000 voters at 39 sites in the Tigris River Valley, averaging 290 voters per site an hour. Governor Kashmoula of Mosul thanked everyone who voted and encouraged more

voting in a televised address. He said it was a great day for Iraq, and that he was proud to vote.

Polling sites were plentiful throughout Iraq. In Baghdad, Dr. Fareed Ayar, an Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq (IECI) member said, "We have 6,230 polling sites, and 175,000 to 200,000 IECI staff throughout Iraq. Early estimates show more than 10 million voters participated in the polling process."

Iraqi citizens from Al Hadr are excited about the future of their country and are hoping the constitution will bring Iraq together. Millions of constitution draft copies were distributed at the polling centers during the voting.

"I hope that by voting 'yes' for the constitution that it will serve my country well and that security will spread across Iraq," said Saleh Moter Spishan. "God almighty will bring his country peace, and the constitution will stop all the bloodshed in Iraq."

Top Stories

March to democracy continues, *Page 2*

Iraqi, U.S. raids catch most-wanted terrorists, *Page 3*

Civil Affairs Soldiers reach out to local population, *Page 4*

Soldier donates blood to save another, *Page 5*

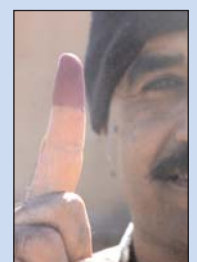
Warrant officer celebrates service in Iraqi Army, *Page 6*

Task Force Baghdad scouts secure, rebuild Baghdad, *Page 7*

Iraqi Security, Coalition Forces operations this week, *Page 8*

Iraqi Police kill would-be car bombers in Rusafa, *Page 9*

Iraqis Taking the Lead: photos of the constitutional referendum vote *Pages 11, 12*



March to democracy continues

By Gen. George W. Casey Jr.

Multi-National Force - Iraq Commanding General

What the world witnessed Saturday in Iraq was Iraqis voting for their future. While the final outcome is not known at the time this article is being written, the important thing is that Iraqis took the next step in their push for democracy by exercising their right to vote.

Everybody did their part to ensure a successful referendum and we accomplished our objective: each Iraqi had the opportunity to vote. The Iraqi government conducted outreach to ensure citizens learned about the Constitution, the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq ran the polling stations, Iraqi Security Forces along with the Coalition forces provided outstanding security and Iraqis voted.



Gen. George W. Casey Jr.

Despite constant insurgent threats of violence, referendum day was relatively peaceful and significantly better than the January election. Last January there were approximately 300 attacks across the country, about 90 directed against polling sites. Saturday there were less than 100 attacks across the country and less than 20 directed against polling sites. Overall, almost a 70 percent drop in attacks.

Also, there was a 90 percent drop in casualties (battle and election related). More than 10 million people voted in over 6,000 polling centers ... a million more voters than in January! The inability of the insurgency to stop Iraqis from voting was a significant failure for them and a victory for democracy.

Iraqis voted under the shadow of the recent al-Zawahiri letter to al-Zarqawi outlining al Qaeda's desire to form a base of operations in Iraq, establish a Caliphate and export terror throughout the region.

The successful referendum firmly establishes Iraq on the track toward democracy. As a matter of fact, the upcoming trial of former dictator Saddam Hussein is testimony to Iraqis following the rule of law and letting the system work ... even for the very person who oppressed them for more than three decades.

In 60 days Iraqis face another milestone in their march to democracy—the election of their leaders for the next four years. Irreversible momentum is building and while insurgents and terrorists still continue their attempts to derail the process, we are confident that the Iraqi people will prevail in their quest.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Spencer Case

Iraqi Soldiers with the 2nd MTR pose in their vehicle before leaving on their mission to Basrah.

Iraqi Soldiers deliver

By Spc. Spencer Case

207th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AREA ANACONDA

— As a line of cargo vehicles bearing the Iraqi flag traveled from Tallil to Basrah, people living by the highway came to the roadside to cheer their countrymen.

For U.S. advisors, who trained the Soldiers of the 2nd Motorized Transportation Regiment while the unit was in its early stages, small victories like this are stepping-stones to an independent Iraq.

A few days earlier, Soldiers of the 2nd MTR along with a small group of U.S. advisors secured 18 truckloads of medical materials from Al Taji and brought them to Numanayah. The Iraqis finished the mission Oct. 1 by transporting the cargo to British authorities on the outskirts of Basrah.

"I'm impressed with the Iraqi convoy system here," said British Army Maj. Steve Penkethman of the King's Royal Hussars, whose unit processes cargo from the 2nd MTR.

"It brings the equipment we're expecting when we're told it will arrive. It's a definite improvement," he said.

The Iraqis have come a long way, said 1st Lt. Andrew Daugherty, a U.S. advisor to the 2nd MTR who rode along with the Iraqis to Basrah.

The success of the Basrah mission is the result of a culmination of months of training and hard work. The unit became operational in late June, and in July they began performing longer missions.

"I'm ready now to make my company the best because we have all the training," said Iraqi Maj. Atwan Jabour, a company commander in the 2nd MTR.

MNF-I Commanding General

Gen. George W. Casey Jr.

Combined Press Information Center Director

Lt. Col. Steven A. Boylan
steven.boyland@iraq.centcom.mil

Command Information Chief

Maj. Patricia C. Anderson
patricia.anderson@iraq.centcom.mil



Editor.....Staff Sgt. Brett B. McMillan

brett.mcmillan@iraq.centcom.mil

Assistant Editor.....Staff Sgt. Nick Minecci

nicholas.minecci@iraq.centcom.mil

Command Information NCOIC...Master Sgt. Michele R. Hammonds

michele.hammonds@iraq.centcom.mil

This Week in Iraq is an authorized publication produced by Multi-National Force

- Iraq. Contents are not necessarily the official views of or endorsed by the U.S. Government or DoD. The editorial content is not the responsibility of the Public Affairs Office of the Multi-National Force - Iraq. Questions and comments should be directed to the editor at MNFInewsletter@iraq.centcom.mil.

Iraqi, U.S. raids catch most-wanted terrorists

By Maj. Russ Goemaere
2nd Brigade Combat Team
Public Affairs

BAGHDAD — Iraqi Army Soldiers in east Baghdad coordinated and executed a large-scale operation to capture suspected terrorists Oct. 8.

Three Iraqi Army battalions struck numerous targets simultaneously and detained 12 individuals.

The suspected terrorists are thought to be responsible for a minimum of 15 separate deadly attacks on schools, Iraqi police stations, government officials and Iraqi Army and Coalition Forces convoys. They are suspected of using small arms, rocket-propelled



Soldiers from 1st Bn., 9th Field Artillery Regt., 2nd BCT detain a suspect during a raid Oct. 8.

U.S. Army photos by Spc. Ben Brody

grenades, mortars, roadside bombs and grenades to kill and maim civilians, and Iraqi and Coalition Forces.

“The 2nd Iraqi Brigade continues to disrupt the enemy in its area, severely hindering the terrorists’ abilities to influence the elections, terrorize Iraqi citizens and prevent a free and stable Iraq,” said Capt. Chris Harris, an Army officer

who works with the Iraqi Army.

In another part of east Baghdad, Coalition Forces detained five wanted terrorists during an early-morning raid.

The suspects are members of a terrorist group responsible for attacks against Coalition Forces and Iraqi civilians.

Soldiers raided the suspects’ residences and then conducted a cordon-and-knock in the surrounding neighborhoods.

“After we didn’t find our suspects initially, we moved out into the neighborhood to search other homes,” said Capt. Sam Allen, a platoon leader with 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat



1st Sgt. William Zito and Capt. Sam Allen, both of 1st Bn., 9th Field Artillery Regt., 2nd BCT, examine a person’s identification.

Team. “In one house, the non-commissioned officers were on the ball and thought one guy was acting suspiciously. The neighbors, after seeing that we were there to help, told us that he was lying about his name, and it turned out that he was on the brigade’s most-wanted list.”

Since local residents cooperated with Soldiers, force was not necessary in apprehending the suspect, Allen said.

“It had already been a long day when we found the suspect — we had searched about 50 homes — and that speaks volumes of our Soldiers’ work ethic and dedication,” Allen said. “They always put 100 percent into every mission, and it pays off every day.”



Soldiers from 1st Bn., 9th Field Artillery Regt., 2nd BCT search outside a Baghdad home during the raid.

Elements of IRMO fall into MNSTC-I fold

By Sgt. Lorie Jewell
Multi-National Security Transition
Command - Iraq Public Affairs

BAGHDAD — Merging portions of the civilian-led Iraq Reconstruction Management Office with the Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq puts one organization in charge of helping Iraq’s government develop the country’s security forces, officials said.

MNSTC-I took operational control of the former IRMO Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defense missions Oct. 1. Those

two groups, formerly under the authority of the U.S. State Department, are now referred to as P3 MOI and MOD-AST, respectively.

In a letter to incoming personnel, MNSTC-I Commander U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Martin E. Dempsey noted how the missions of each group may differ, but they work toward a common goal. MNSTC-I’s job is to help build security forces and get them into the fight; their task is to advise and assist with building the ministries that support the forces.

“Bringing these two efforts closer together will see a marriage of civilian

expertise and military resources, greater coordination and unity of effort,” Dempsey said.

The merge adds about 65 people to MNSTC-I, with roughly half moving into offices at the Phoenix Base headquarters, said British Brig. Jeremy Robbins, MNSTC-I deputy commander.

Robbins is enthusiastic about the command’s new dynamics and the interesting composite it presents. “While under military command, our aim is very clear,” Robbins said. “To build a civilian-led civil service and bureaucracy capable of support the Iraqi Security Forces in the fight.”

Civil Affairs Soldiers reach out to local population

By Sgt. Mitch Armbruster
207th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AREA ANACONDA, BALAD — The foundation of a good relationship is found in a smile as civil affairs Soldiers have a chance to engage in building relationships with the Iraqi people.

Members of 1st Corps Support Command (COSCOM) G-5, Civil Military Operations, also known as civil affairs, established relationships with the citizens of the local communities around Logistical Support Area Anaconda by offering aid and support with humanitarian efforts to help the people become more self-sufficient.

"Seeing the kids smile makes this job worthwhile," said Staff Sgt. Rollie Anderson, civil affairs noncommissioned officer in charge.

"Many of these kids have a hard life, but by offering them aid they are grateful for what they receive, and it makes me happy to give them something to hold on to."

Building relationships has been a major



U.S. Army photo by Capt. James Andrews

Sgt. Traci Varrasso, a Soldier with 1st COSCOM, hands out candy to the kids of a village just outside of LSA Anaconda during a G-5 mission.

part of the civil affairs mission. They have engaged in water treatment projects as well as handing out humanitarian aid to assist the community.

"Our job is to work with the people to keep the area safe," said 1st Sgt. Paul Lewis, the civil affairs first sergeant. "I feel lucky to be here; this is a great place to be."

Civil affairs Soldiers work with local community leaders to bridge the gap between different cultures.

These connections help forge a lasting relationship with the Iraqis.

"This is a wonderful mission. We get a chance to enhance the quality of life for the Iraqi people," said Lt. Col. Ron Kirby, assistant chief of staff for G-5 Civil Military Operations.

"We've helped with 23 water purification projects for 19,000 Iraqis, who have never had water this clean to drink," Kirby added.

The detachment has given out over 8,000 school and

humanitarian aid packages to the families in the local villages.

"We give them a hand to lift them up," said Kirby.

"The Soldiers' 'can do' spirit has been great. These Soldiers have done a great job, and I'm very proud of them."

Many of the Soldiers in the detachment learned to do the job in country.

The Soldiers were from different units and worked at different jobs in the military.

Marines, Seabees rebuild Hit bridge after car bomb

By 1st Lt. Rob Dolan
Regimental Combat Team - 2
Public Affairs Affairs

HIT — Navy Seabees and Marines from Regimental Combat Team - 2 repaired a section of bridge here Oct. 11 that was damaged by an insurgent car bomb Sept. 4.

The bridge spans the Euphrates River connecting Hit to the suburb of At Turbah on the east side of the river.

"They rehearsed the move in and repair several times prior to movement to the site," according to Lt. Cmdr. Darcy Wolfe, assistant operations officer, Naval Construction Regiment - 30.

The 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 7th Iraqi Army Division provided security by cordoning the bridge on both sides of the river and erecting defensive schemes that will protect the bridge against future incidents.

"Actual construction took three days — two days to perform the second site survey,



Courtesy photo

A Seabee welds repairs on the bridge to Hit.

confirm all measurements, pre-fab the solution and rehearse. The final day was transporting the solution to the site and performing the repairs," said Wolfe.

The mood in Hit was described by the Sailors as "good, and the citizens appeared extremely pleased" now that the inconvenience they had suffered for the past month has been rectified.

The bridge was open to pedestrian traffic only, until after Saturday's referendum, at which point it opened to controlled vehicular traffic.

Late morning, on Sept. 4, Marines witnessed a white Suburban stop in the middle of the bridge. Moments later an explosion echoed through the city. When the fire and smoke cleared a large section of the aging bridge was missing, and the citizens of At

Turbah were effectively cut off from the city.

Marines and Iraqi Soldiers began providing permanent presence in Hit in late July when the joint force rolled through the city during Operation Saif (Sword). Since then the Soldiers and Marines have been conducting routine patrols and targeted raids against suspected terrorists.



Heroes of the Week

Soldier gives piece of herself to save another

Story and photo by
Sgt. Mitch Armbruster
207th Mobile Public Affairs
Detachment

LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AREA ANACONDA, BALAD — The circulatory system keeps oxygen moving through the body by using blood to move blood cells filled with oxygen throughout the body.

Sgt. Emily Lively, a Soldier with the 4th-159th Aviation Maintenance Company, donated blood to help save the life of a fellow Soldier here and found a need for blood donors across the post.

Lively was in the area of the hospital when an Airman asked if she would be willing to give blood to save the life of a Soldier who lost his legs in an improvised explosive attack.



Sgt. Emily Lively, a Soldier with 4/159th Aviation, packs to help get the unit ready to redeploy.

to honor our Soldiers," Lively said.

"Sgt. Lively is great and would do anything to help out," said Sgt. Amy Louise Brown, a fellow Soldier from the 4th-

Lively knew the nature of the Soldier's wounds and hurried out to the street. She grabbed a Soldier and asked him to donate. The selfless actions of the two Soldiers helped save a life.

"This is another way to honor our Soldiers," Lively said.

159th AVN Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment.

Lively put together a call list of Soldiers from the 4/159 AVN.

She wanted to gather names for the hospital to allow them more options for blood during a time of need.

"We are there for our Soldiers when they need us," Lively said. "The enlisted and officers are all for it. They would do anything to help."

Lively took the initiative to put together a memo informing 1st Corps Support Command of the need for blood and asked if the initiative could be put out base wide. She said the decision is still pending.

"One hour of a person's time is all it takes, and anybody can do it," Lively said.

Blood is an essential part of the body and life, but giving blood to allow someone the chance to survive is a heroic task every service member can partake in.



Coalition Partners



Romanian Medical Detachment looks after sick, injured

By Maj. Dana S. Minor
344th Medical Task Force
Public Affairs

The 344th Medical Task Force is charged with providing first quality medical care to a large population of detainees. This important mission requires the expertise of a group of medical professionals from Romania.

The 2nd Romanian Medical Detachment in OIF is comprised of 20 select personnel made up of both active duty Soldiers and civilians. The detachment's mission is to provide support to U.S. medical personnel working in the hospitals and to provide required



Medical professionals of the 2nd Romanian Medical Detachment

medical care to detainees and others admitted to the hospital. This group is commanded by Col. Florin Paul, M.D., Romanian Army. In Romania, Paul is Deputy Surgeon General for Romanian Armed Forces and is a specialist in infectious disease control. The

2nd Detachment is scheduled to return to Romania in November after a six-month tour, but is expected to be replaced by another detachment.

In addition to Paul, the detachment has three other physicians and 16 registered nurses and registered techni-

cians. These individuals work in all medical disciplines, from intensive care unit to laboratory to dental to pharmacy. One big difference between the U.S. and their Romanian

counterparts is that registered nurses are considered enlisted not officers in Romania.

"They've been a great asset, and we'll be sorry to see them leave," said Maj. Brad Wenstrup, TF MED 344 chief of surgery. "The next group has some big shoes to fill."



Heroes of the Week

Warrant officer celebrates service in Iraqi Army

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Monika Comeaux
207th Mobile Public Affairs
Detachment

LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AREA ANACONDA, BALAD — Members of the new Iraqi Army face dangers on the roads of Iraq on a daily basis, just like Coalition troops.

Transportation Warrant Officer Shouki Goullan is one of the Soldiers overseeing transportation operations, traveling with the convoys of the 1st Motorized Transportation Regiment.

He has been in the new Iraqi Army for a year now.

"There is a big difference between the old and the new Iraqi armies. The freedom, the way we are treated is much different. We had no rights under the old regime. Today we can express our thoughts," he said.

"They are also paying us good money now," Goullan added. He is able to fairly

comfortably support his family from his income.

He has two children he gets to see every 20 days, which is much better than in the old regime.

Another big difference is how you were not allowed to leave the army in the old system, even if you spent 50 years serving, he said. Today Iraqi Soldiers sign two-year contracts, and they may extend.

"I am in the Army to defend my country," said Goullan, when asked what drove him to choose such a seemingly dangerous occupation. "I took a big risk by joining the army," he said.

He was amused when he first got to work with the Americans.

"Those people came from far away with good experience," Goullan said. He said the Iraqi Soldiers took advantage of the experience the American Soldiers had, and learned a lot from them.

"I learned many new things. For example, how to obey orders," he said.

He hopes to further enhance his knowl-



Warrant Officer Shouki Goullan

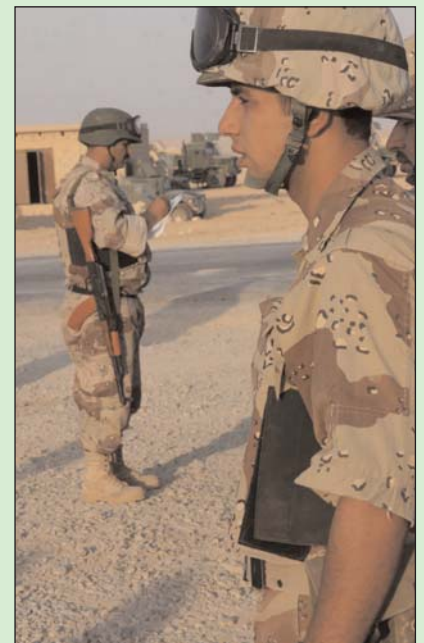
edge in the Iraqi Army. He compares developing the new Army to raising a child. "With time, he is going to be stronger."

Referendum preparations ...



Iraqi Army Soldiers lay barbed wire while preparing a polling site in Baghdad for the Iraqi Constitutional referendum.

U.S. Marine Corps photos by Sgt. Ryan S. Scranton



Iraqi Security Forces Soldiers muster before preparing a polling site for the Iraqi Constitutional referendum.

Task Force Baghdad scouts secure, rebuild Baghdad

Story and photo by Spc. Ben Brody
2nd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

BAGHDAD — Task Force Baghdad Soldiers continue to conduct wide-ranging operations in east Baghdad.

"We're hunting the bad guys every night, every day," said Spc. Dwayne Jackson, a driver with Troop A, 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division.

Jackson said he is ready for the task at hand. "We spent a year training for these kinds of missions before we came here," he said. "Everything comes naturally to us now."

Jackson's unit recently set up observation points on a major roadway in its sector, looking for signs of terrorist activity.

At one observation point, Soldiers painted over inflammatory graffiti on a brick wall near the highway.

"We're painting over it to send a message that terrorists aren't welcome here," said Sgt. Matt Parker, 301st Psychological Operations Company, operating in support of 3/7 Cav. Regt.

Parker also brought posters advertising the Baghdad Tips Hotline, a phone number and e-mail address that Baghdad residents can use to report criminal activity.

"The program has been increasing in effectiveness," said Parker. "The locals are interested in getting terrorists out of their country."

"We've seen IED and rocket attacks decrease since we took over the sector," said 1st Sgt. John Campbell, Troop A first sergeant.



2nd Lt. Kyle Hemminger, Staff Sgt. Chris Sherlock and Spc. John Murphy, all of Troop A, 3rd Squadron, 7th Cav. Regt., search an abandoned building in Baghdad for signs of insurgent activity.

"Since we've been running with the increased presence, attacks have sharply dropped off. We're out every night in force, showing people we're keeping them safe."

The squadron is involved in numerous projects in its sector, rebuilding infrastructure neglected under Saddam Hussein's regime.

Civil military operations officers from 3/7 Cav. recently inspected project sites in

Jisr-Diyala and Medain to assess their progress.

"We're focused on schools, water, electricity, sewers and government sites," said 1st Lt. Richard Paco, 3/7 Cav., assistant CMO officer. "These have a great impact on the economy — in the short term by providing jobs and in the long term by creating a healthy infrastructure."

At an elementary school in Jisr-Diyala, Paco inspected a generator, new desks and repairs paid for by the squadron commander's emergency relief program, which provides funds for battalion-sized units to contract for improvements on local infrastructure in their areas.

Paco said work is prioritized according to need. Outlying villages tend to need improved water and electric service the most.

"The kids love school projects," Paco said. "One of our contractors paints pictures of soccer players on the walls — the children like that guy a lot."

School guard Majeed Mohammed Jassim described the condition of the school two years ago.

"There were no lights, the walls [needed repair and there were] big holes in the ceiling, and the bathroom didn't work," Jassim said. "The work repairing the school is good for the children; they are happy to come to school now."

"Some of the projects we see, we had nothing to do with, which is a good sign," Paco said.

"People's confidence in their government is growing because of these projects, and the huge turnout during voter registration reflects that."



We've got a little old convoy ...

An Iraqi Warrant Officer with the 2nd Motorized Transportation Regiment directs his troops during a supply mission to support British forces serving near Basrah. The 2nd MTR has been operational for several months.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Engels Tejeda.



Coalition, Iraqi Security Forces' Operations Review



By Staff Sgt. Julie Nicolov
Multi-National Corps – Iraq Public Affairs

Millions of Iraqi citizens left the relative safety of their homes to vote Saturday, entering festive streets amid the sounds of happy shouting instead of deadly shooting.

Less than 100 attacks were launched against Coalition Forces (CF), Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and civilians. The relatively low level of attacks is likely an effective of recent security force offensive operations, Iraqi Islamic Party endorsement of the vote and strict security measures.

Operations Sayaid II, River Gate, Iron Fist, Restoring Rights and Saratoga kicked off at various times throughout September and October to create a safe environment for referendum voters.

The most dangerous and crucial operations took place in the Euphrates River Valley, a route that once served as a path for insurgents to travel from Syria to Baghdad where they could either stay there to work their terror, or continue on to other cities.

"What is really critical in October is Operation Sayaid II," said Maj. Brandon Robbins, operations officer, Multi-National Corps - Iraq. "CF and ISF have increased the intensity against the enemy."



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. James L. Harper Jr.

Constitutional referendum voting in Mosul saw thousands of citizens walking to the polling stations Saturday.



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Robert R. Attebury

A Fallujah resident displays his ink-stained finger, along with his son, after voting in Saturday's constitutional referendum.

Over the past month, CF and ISF have swept through these cities, rooted out insurgents, detained the enemy and weapons caches and created a safe atmosphere for the people of Iraq to vote for their constitution.

The night before the referendum vote, Coalition Forces captured a large cache of weapons, mines, assorted improvised explosive device-making materials and medical supplies in Haditha, and a cache of completed IEDs, mortars, machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades near Taqaddum. Smaller caches were also discovered in Saqlawiyah, Abu Fleis and Khalidiyah, possibly indicating enemy preparation for intended attacks during the referendum.

In the week before the elections, 28 polling sites were attacked. Despite the danger, locals proudly displayed Iraqi flags in public, and the tips line was

its most active on Oct. 14 — signs that public support was growing and participation in the referendum may be greater than expected.

The ISF provided the bulk of security during the referendum vote. The CF stood ready to provide emergency support, but allowed the ISF the space they needed to secure their own cities and country.

"The Ministries of Defense and Interior stepped up today with a common vision for security," said Col. Joseph DiSalvo, commander of Coalition Forces in east Baghdad. "I talked to many Iraqi police leaders at the polling sites. They were interested, engaged and extremely vigilant in the performance of their duties."

More than 3,000 Iraqi Army troops saturated the ERV, blocking the insurgents' route into the country. National and provincial borders were closed the night before the vote.

As a result, 50 to 90 percent of registered voters, depending on the province, cast their ballots safely.

Polls throughout Iraq, which were oper-

See OPERATIONS, next page

Iraqi Police kill would-be car bombers in Rusafa

RUSAF — Iraqi Police (IP) killed two terrorists before they could detonate a car bomb in east Baghdad Oct. 6.

The three plainclothes IP officers were on patrol when they noticed a car stopped on the side of the road. The driver was behind the wheel, but the passenger was standing up outside the car and talking on a cell phone.

The terrorists, believed to be from the town of Ar Ramadi, pulled their weapons and fired after the IP officers identified themselves and asked a few simple questions about what they were doing and if they had their vehicle registration.

“When the terrorists fired at us, they hit one of us in the arm, but all three of us took cover and immediately fired back,” said Dafer, of the El Wea Police Department.

Within seconds, both terrorists were dead. The IPs called for more support on the radio and provided first aid to their wounded comrade.

“We called for backup, and they noticed that there were many missiles and containers of propane gas, so they called our explosive ordnance disposal team,” said Tharer.

An Iraqi EOD team responded quickly to the scene.

The EOD team deactivated the car bomb

and hauled it away, moving the explosives to a safe location.

The station commander explained what he thought of his police officers’ performance.

“They are very heroic. They are brave men with good training. We are very good at fighting the terrorists and keeping the people safe,” said Col. Tharer.

The IPs have been proactive in searching out the terrorists in their area of operations.

“I am ready to do anything for my family, for my kids, for my government and the people of Iraq,” said Alli, another IP officer.

Operations

from previous page

ated by Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq, were open between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. Several polling sites stayed open late to accommodate the long lines of people who often waited 90 minutes to exercise their rights.

In Hit, mosques were telling citizens it was their religious duty not to vote, and in Haditha people appeared scared to vote, yet citizens in nearby Barwanah and in Rawah and Akashat voted in surprisingly high numbers. In Barwanah, the mood on the street was described as festive, and children played openly in the streets of Fallujah.

One Baghdad woman was so excited that she dipped four of her fingers



Courtesy photo

Iraqi Soldiers search referendum voters at a checkpoint in Tall Afar.

in the purple ink used to indicate those who have already cast their ballots.

“The people and the government of Zafaraniya (a region of Baghdad) are much closer now than they were in January,” said Dr. Mohamed, Council Chairman of Rusafa District of Baghdad. “The people were not afraid to vote today.”

Turnout was lighter than anticipated in Ramadi due to imam announced security concerns, but voters and poll workers remained positive, participation picked up as the day progressed, and not a single polling site was forced to close.

Those who visited schools in the weeks before the referendum noted a positive energy among the children. During one of the daily briefs given to the commanding generals, information operations noted the excitement from one of those visits.

“They said the kids can’t wait until they’re old enough to vote, something we take for granted,” Robbins said.

After the ballots are counted, the results of the referendum vote will be released. CF and ISF continue to stand guard against possible insurgent attacks throughout Iraq.

Eight insurgents sentenced to life imprisonment

BAGHDAD — The Central Criminal Court of Iraq held 18 trials last week convicting 21 security detainees for various crimes including possession of illegal weapons, illegal border crossing and assault.

Eight detainees were sentenced to life imprisonment for possession of illegal weapons.

Upon conviction, all defendants are turned over to the Iraqi Corrections Service to serve their sentences.

To date, the CCCI has held 622 trials of insurgents suspected of anti-Iraqi and anti-Coalition activities threatening the security of Iraq and targeting MNF-I. These proceedings have resulted in 576 individual convictions with sentences ranging up to 30 years imprisonment.

Iraqi citizens catch terrorist, turn him in to U.S. Soldiers

BAGHDAD — A group of Iraqi citizens living in southwest Baghdad detained a suspected terrorist, then called a Task Force Baghdad tips hotline and Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment arrived within minutes.

In other combat operations Oct. 8, Iraqi Soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Iraqi Army Brigade carried out an early-morning cordon and search in the Abu Ghraib district of west Baghdad.

Within minutes of their arrival Iraqi Forces secured the area and detained two terror suspects. The suspects are believed involved in killing and kidnapping Iraqi police officers, planting improvised explosive devices and making remote-control detonated bombs.

Iraqi recruits become Soldiers

Story and photo courtesy of 172 SBCT

Q-WEST BASE COMPLEX — On Sept. 17, 3rd Brigade 2nd Iraqi Army (IA) Division Basic Combat Training (BCT) Class began its first day of training. Fifty-seven Iraqi Soldiers coming from the 1st, 2nd, 3rd IA Battalions and from their Brigade headquarters reported for BCT.

The first day began with a complete medical screening. All IA Soldiers received medical evaluations to ensure they were physically able to perform the challenging tasks of the BCT class. Once the Medical screening was complete, the

IA Soldiers went to the Centralized Issuing Facility (CIF) to get their uniforms and other necessary items for training.

After the Iraqi Soldiers were finished with the CIF, they were able to move into their barracks. Each Soldier was provided a bunk and a wall locker. They received classes on wearing their uniform and how to organize their wall lockers. Uniform and wall locker inspections are part of the daily routine at BCT. As their first day came to a close, the Academy Commandant, Sgt. Maj. Murrell, provided his guidance and motivational comments. Sgt. Sultan Mohamed



Iraqi Army recruits begin basic training.

Edham, the platoon sergeant of 2nd platoon, was asked how attending the BCT would affect Iraq's future; "My goal is the security of my country and to build a future for Iraq," he said. "My second goal is to work together, Kurds and Arabs as one team to fight terrorists."

Rebuilding Iraq



Fallujah's electric network

Camp Fallujah Laydown Yard, a 10,000-square-meter facility, is now loading trucks with electrical materials as work gets under way to upgrade Fallujah's electric network. Over \$100,000 worth of equipment including cable, insulators and connectors were delivered to the city in four truckloads Oct. 12 with Ministry of Electricity officials being a part of that convoy. Up to \$22 million worth of electrical materials will be ordered and delivered. Contractor

EMTA was awarded the \$330,000 contract to build the Laydown Yard June 9, and construction started June 16. The yard is finished, but the contract also provides for maintenance and operations through November.

TR Basrah Village Roads - Segment 5

Al Haweer, Basrah Governorate, a \$440,000 contract was awarded to IRRF Nasir Kareem Hassan & Partners Co., who employed approximately 100 local construction workers a day. The project was to improve and pave a 3.3 km winding dirt road, in a congested neighborhood, to a two-lane, six-meter wide, asphalt road with shoulders. Project started in December 2004 and was completed Oct. 12. The local community of 25,000 residents benefit from a safer, reliable, paved road to schools, water treatment plant and other community services. The road also includes five culvert pipes passing water for local farm use.



Nidhamiyah School

Al Mandeel Company completed a \$25,000 contract in -IRRF Qadisiyah Province. Construction began Sept. 13 and completed Oct. 1 with approximately 14 Iraqi workers a day. A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held Oct. 10. Contract called for the construction of three five by seven meter classrooms in a separate building, adjacent to the main school building. Interior and exterior plastering, tile, electrical and painting was completed for new rooms. The existing building has seven classrooms and two teachers' rooms for 340 primary school students. The new classrooms expand the school structure and opportunities for more children to get a quality education in a healthy environment.

East Baghdad's 19 water compact units in 9 Nissan

Al Sahba Co. of Baghdad has the \$2 million contract to put in 19 water compact units in 9 Nissan. Construction just got under way, and about 12 Iraqi workers are on the crew. Each of the 19 units will get water from a drilled well and have the capacity to produce 15,000 liters of potable, clean water daily. Currently they are working on plastering walls, roof tiles, placing concrete and drilling wells. Scheduled construction completion date is Dec. 6. About 300,000 people will benefit from this project. This project was added onto the already existing \$2.8 million contract to install 27 water compact units in Sadr City, so the new total contract amount is now \$4.8 million.





U.S. Army photo by Maj. Russ Goemaere



Courtesy photo

Left, an Iraqi woman jubilantly lifts her purple-stained finger moments after voting in the Oct. 15 constitutional referendum in the Tissa Nissan district of east Baghdad. Above, a man proudly does the same.



Iraqis taking the lead



Courtesy photo

Two voters show their national pride as they display their evidence of voting "yes" or "no" to a constitution that would define democracy in Iraq.



U.S. Army photo by Capt. Alan Mingledorff

An Iraqi woman casts her vote in the constitutional referendum Saturday as a young boy watches.



Courtesy photo

Iraqi citizens in Samarra walk to a polling station to vote on the constitutional referendum Saturday.



Courtesy photo



Courtesy photo



Courtesy photo

Helping to ensure a secure environment for voters Saturday, an Iraqi Soldier in Samarra keeps a lookout from a rooftop for any terrorist activity near a polling station. Above left, Iraqi Security Forces distribute ballots (lower left) for the constitutional referendum.



Courtesy photo



Courtesy photo

Left, an Iraqi citizen prepares to place his ballot in the constitutional referendum Saturday. Above, Mosul residents make their way to and from a polling station.



U.S. Marine Corps photo by
Sgt. Ryan S. Scranton



Courtesy photo



U.S. Army photo by 2nd Lt. Christopher McComb

Iraqi citizens cast their ballots during the constitutional referendum vote Saturday near Kadamiyah, Abu Ghraib.

U.S. Soldiers, right, work alongside Iraqi Security Forces, left, to establish polling sites and provide security for the constitutional referendum.